

Message Text

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47

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-07 L-02

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R 241706Z FEB 75

FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8212

INFO USMISSION USBERLIN

AMEMBASSY BERLIN

AMCONSUL BREMEN

AMCONSUL DUSSELDORF

AMCONSUL FRANKFURT

AMCONSUL HAMBURG

AMCONSUL MUNICH

AMCONSUL STUTTGART

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY LONDON

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, GW

SUBJECT: CHANCELLOR SCHMIDT'S ILLNESS

1. THE SUDDEN ILLNESS OF FEDERAL CHANCELLOR SCHMIDT HAS FORCED THE POSTPONEMENT OF THE BUDGET DEBATE AND HAS SLOWED DOWN THE WHEELS OF THE BONN GOVERNMENT. ACCORDING TO SCHMIDT'S OFFICE, HE IS SUFFERING FROM PNEUMONIA AND PLEURISY AND WILL STILL BE IN BED FOR SOME DAYS. SCHMIDT'S PERSONAL ASSISTANT TOLD AN EMBASSY OFFICER FEBRUARY 21 THAT THE CHANCELLOR SHOWED NO SIGNS OF ILLNESS DURING THE SECRETARY'S VISIT BUT BECAME SICK IN THE AFTERNOON OF FEBRUARY 16. LATEST REPORTS INDICATE THAT HE IS RECOVERING AND WILL SHORTLY BE ABLE TO DO SOME WORK AT HOME.

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2. "DIE WELT" CARRIED AN ARTICLE FEBRUARY 22, INDICAT-

ING THAT SCHMIDT'S ILLNESS MIGHT BE MORE SERIOUS THAN WAS GENERALLY KNOWN AND GIVEN THE CHANCELLOR'S MEDICAL HISTORY, THE RECENT ILLNESS HAS INCREASED SPECULATION ABOUT THE GENERAL STATE OF HIS HEALTH. HOWEVER, THERE HAS NOT BEEN ANY EVIDENCE THAT THE ILLNESS IS, IN FACT, MORE SERIOUS THAN HAS BEEN CLAIMED BY HIS OFFICE. SCHMIDT'S AIDE REMARKED THAT THE ILLNESS MAY PROVE A BOON IN THAT IT HAS FORCED THE CHANCELLOR TO TAKE A REST AND TO SLOW DOWN SOMEWHAT.

3. GIVEN THE CHANCELLOR'S LEADERSHIP STYLE (I.E., PROPENSITY TO CENTRALIZE DECISION-MAKING) IT IS NOT SURPRISING THAT THE WHEELS OF GOVERNMENT IN BONN HAVE SLOWED DOWN. NOT ONLY HAS THE BUDGET DEBATE BEEN POSTPONED BUT A DECISION ON A COMPROMISE WITH THE FDP ON WORKER CODETERMINATION (MITBESTIMMUNG) HAS ALSO BEEN PUT OFF.

HILLENBRAND

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Message Attributes

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Margaret P. Grafeld
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To: STATE
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